

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A system for conditioning clinically related billing items, comprising:
 - an input interface to receive a billing item associated with a clinical event; and
 - a conditioning engine, the conditioning engine communicating with the input interface to receive the unique billing item and generate a verification of the existence of mandatory documentation or affirming data elements as a condition of transmitting the billing item.
2. A system according to claim 1, wherein the mandatory billing guidelines comprise at least one of regulatory and administrative guidelines.
3. A system according to claim 2, wherein the mandatory billing guidelines comprise at least regulatory guidelines, the regulatory guidelines comprising at least one of Medicare guidelines and Medicare guidelines.
4. A system according to claim 1, wherein the compliance verification performed by the conditioning engine comprises checking evidentiary support for the mandatory documentation or affirming data elements against a compliance template.
5. A system according to claim 4, wherein the evidentiary support comprises at least clinical documentation, the clinical documentation comprising at least one of a patient chart, physicians orders, diagnostic codes, a history and physical record, a medication administration record, a set of progress notes, a treatment plan and a radiology report.

6. A system according to claim 1, wherein the conditioning engine communicates the billing item or data related to the billing item to a holds queue when the verification against the mandatory billing guidelines is not initially satisfied.
7. A system according to claim 6, wherein the billing item or data related to the billing item is further reviewed for satisfaction of the mandatory billing guidelines while in the holds queue.
8. A system according to claim 7, wherein the further review comprises an automated search for additional clinical documentation.
9. A system according to claim 7, wherein the further review comprises an at least partly manual search for additional clinical documentation.
10. A system according to claim 1, wherein the mandatory billing guidelines are stored in a compliance database.
11. A system according to claim 10, wherein the compliance database is updateable.
12. A method for conditioning clinically related billing items, comprising:
receiving a billing item associated with a clinical event; and
generating a verification of the existence of mandatory documentation or affirming data elements against mandatory billing guidelines as a condition of transmitting the billing item.
13. A method according to claim 12, wherein the mandatory billing guidelines comprise regulatory guidelines.

14. A method according to claim 13, wherein the regulatory guidelines comprise at least one of Medicare guidelines and Medicare guidelines.
15. A method according to claim 12, wherein the step of generating a verification comprises checking evidentiary support for the mandatory documentation or affirming data elements against a compliance template.
16. A method according to claim 15, wherein the evidentiary support comprises at least clinical documentation, the clinical documentation comprising at least one of a patient chart, physicians orders, diagnostic codes, a history and physical record, a medication administration record, a set of progress notes, a treatment plan and a radiology report.
17. A method according to claim 12, further comprising a step of communicating the billing item or data related to the billing item to a holds queue when the compliance verification against the mandatory billing guidelines is not initially satisfied.
18. A method according to claim 17, further comprising a step of further reviewing the billing item or data related to the billing item for satisfaction of the mandatory billing guidelines while in the holds queue.
19. A method according to claim 18, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an automated search for additional clinical documentation.

20. A method according to claim 18, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an at least partly manual search for additional clinical documentation.
21. A method according to claim 12, wherein the mandatory billing guidelines are stored in a compliance database.
22. A method according to claim 21, wherein the compliance database is updateable.
23. A clinically related billing item, the clinically related billing item being generated according to a method comprising:
 - receiving a billing item associated with a clinical event; and
 - generating a verification of the existence of mandatory documentation or affirming data elements against mandatory billing guidelines as a condition of transmitting the billing item.
24. A clinically related billing item according to claim 23, wherein the mandatory billing guidelines comprise regulatory guidelines.
25. A clinically related billing item according to claim 24, wherein the regulatory guidelines comprise at least one of Medicare guidelines and Medicare guidelines.
26. A clinically related billing item according to claim 23, wherein the step of generating a verification comprises checking evidentiary support for the mandatory documentation or affirming data elements against a compliance template.

27. A clinically related billing item according to claim 26, wherein the evidentiary support comprises at least clinical documentation, the clinical documentation comprising at least one of a patient chart, physicians orders, diagnostic codes, a history and physical record, a medication administration record, a set of progress notes, a treatment plan and a radiology report.
28. A clinically related billing item according to claim 23, wherein the method further comprises a step of communicating the billing item or data related to the billing item to a holds queue when the compliance verification against the mandatory billing guidelines is not initially satisfied.
29. A clinically related billing item according to claim 28, wherein the method further comprises a step of further reviewing the billing item or data related to the billing item for satisfaction of the mandatory billing guidelines while in the holds queue.
30. A clinically related billing item according to claim 29, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an automated search for additional clinical documentation.
31. A clinically related billing item according to claim 29, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an at least partly manual search for additional clinical documentation.
32. A clinically related billing item according to claim 23, wherein the mandatory billing guidelines are stored in a compliance database.

33. A clinically related billing item according to claim 32, wherein the compliance database is updateable.